

# Want to learn to sign? QMU have a course for that

**A short course is now offered by Queen Margaret University to help improve understanding of working with sign language users.**

British Sign Language (BSL) is used by 50,000 to 70,000 people in the UK and the university believes it is an important skill to learn, helping the BSL users to access services they need.

The course is six weeks long and is available online. It is intended for those working in public facing businesses such as retail or social services, and will help participants understand the needs of sign language users and how best to demonstrate good practice when meeting or working with them. The course would be particularly helpful for anyone with responsibility for creating a strategic plan for BSL within their organisation (in relation to the BSL Scotland Act 2015).

The course will be delivered by Yvonne Waddell and Dr Rachel Mason who have real world experience as interpreters, and who have been driving the university's work in BSL.

Yvonne Waddell said: "We are delighted to offer this fully online flexible course that can be accessed from anywhere in the UK and which can be studied at times that fit into people's busy lifestyles. It is important to note that the focus of the six-week course is about ensuring equality of access to services, and not about learning sign language.

"We look forward to building a group of people who are better

equipped to work with members of the deaf community who use sign language and with interpreters who work with deaf sign language users. In just six weeks, we are confident that this course will help equip participants with the skills to ensure interactions with sign language users go smoothly and effectively.”

Yvonne concluded: “In keeping with Scotland’s ambitions to improve equality for BSL users, we are pleased to offer some free places to anyone who lives in Scotland and who meets key criteria.”

Free places for this course are limited and subject to availability.

Closing date for applications is 4 June 2023.

[www.gmu.ac.uk/study-here/short-courses/short-courses/working-with-sign-language-users-and-interpreters/](http://www.gmu.ac.uk/study-here/short-courses/short-courses/working-with-sign-language-users-and-interpreters/)

